

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace paragraph [25] with the following amended paragraph:

[25] When a food item 22 is to be removed from the automated freezer 20, an input 40 sends a signal to a control 42. The control 42 sends a signal to a motor 44, raising a platform 46 under the food items 22. The food items 22 move upwardly through the cartridge 30 and through the buffer 34. When a sensor 48 senses the food item 22 is proximate to an opening 50 in the automated freezer 20, a motor 52 pivots an ~~arm 54~~ arm 56 about a ~~pivot 56~~ pivot 54 to slide the food item 22 out of the opening 50. The ~~arm 54~~ arm 56 then returns to the rest position. In one example, the food item 22 exiting the automated freezer 20 enters an automated grill 21 for cooking the food item 22.

Please replace paragraph [28] with the following amended paragraph:

[28] The automated freezer 20 further includes a sensor 98 that detects when the platform 46 reaches a predetermined location in the automated freezer 20. When the platform 46 reaches the predetermined ~~located~~ location, the automated freezer 20 and the cartridge 30 needs to be reloaded with food items 22. When the sensor 98 detects the platform 46, the motor 44 automatically lowers the platform 46. A visual indicator 102 on the door 24 indicates that the automated freezer 20 and the cartridge 30 must be reloaded with food items 22 to alert an operator to load additional food items 22.

Please replace paragraph [35] with the following amended paragraph:

[35] When the cartridge 30 is removed from the automated freezer 20 to reload the food items 22, a plurality of arms 90 in the buffer 34 retain any food items 22 remaining in the buffer 34 and prevent them from falling from the buffer 34. Figures 4A and 4B illustrate the buffer 34 before the cartridge 30 is loaded into the automated ~~freezer 20~~

freezer 20. The plurality of arms 90 are in a first position and extend into an inner passage 96 of the buffer 34. The plurality of arms 90 are moveable between the first position (shown in Figures 4A and 4B) and a second position (shown in Figures 5A and 5B) substantially perpendicular to the first position. The arms 90 are biased to the first position by a resilient member 92. Preferably, there are four arms 90. However, it is to be understood that any number of arms 90 can be employed.